

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A commodity sales system that is connected with a user computer in a communicable manner and is used when a user purchases a commodity, said commodity sales system comprising:
 - a commodity price specification module that receives a purchase request of a selected commodity from the user computer and specifies a commodity price of the selected commodity;
 - a quote determination module that receives a trade-in request of a used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and determines a trade-in quote of the used article, based on the received quotation requirement information;
 - a deduction setting module that sets a deduction of the selected commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity, according to the trade-in quote of the used article thus determined;
 - a difference calculation module that subtracts the setting of the deduction from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity to calculate a difference; and
 - an amount payable notification module that notifies the user computer of the calculated difference as an amount payable.

2. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1,
wherein said deduction setting module sets the deduction to be
not less than a preset support price.

5 3. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1,
wherein said quote determination module, in response to receipt
of the trade-in quote of the used article and the quotation
requirement information, which is required for quotation of the
used article, specifies a tentative quote of the used article
10 based on the quotation requirement information, compares the
specified tentative quote with a predetermined reference value,
and determines either a price having a value range or a price
having no value range as the trade-in quote of the used article
according to a result of the comparison, and
15 said deduction setting module sets the deduction of the
selected commodity corresponding to a minimum value in the value
range of the price when the price having the value range is
determined as the trade-in quote of the used article, while
setting the deduction of the selected commodity corresponding
20 to the price having no value range when the price having no value
range is determined as the trade-in quote of the used article.

4. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 3,

wherein the predetermined reference value is used to determine whether an assessment of the used article is required to settle a final trade-in price of the used article.

5 5. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 3, wherein said deduction setting module sets the deduction of the selected commodity corresponding to the minimum value in the value range of the price, and when a final trade-in price settled after an assessment of the used article exceeds the minimum value, 10 said amount payable notification module notifies the user computer of a refund corresponding to a difference between the final trade-in price and the minimum value, together with the amount payable.

15 6. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 3, wherein said quote determination module, in the case where the price having no value range is determined as the trade-in quote of the used article, based on the result of the comparison between the tentative quote and the predetermined reference value, 20 determines either a settled price having no value range, which depends upon the tentative quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article or a preset fixed price, which does not depend upon the tentative quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article

according to a value level of the tentative quote.

7. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1,
wherein said deduction setting module, in the case where said
5 quote determination module determines trade-in quotes of
multiple used articles, sets a total deduction of the selected
commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity
price of the selected commodity, according to a sum of the trade-in
quotes of the multiple used articles or a sum of deductions set
10 for the respective used articles.

8. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1,
said commodity sales system further comprising:

an adjustment module that adjusts the difference
15 calculated by said difference calculation module to be not less
than a predetermined value.

9. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 8,
wherein said adjustment module comprises a transmission
20 sub-module that is activated to send the user computer a message
showing that the trade-in request of the used article is not
acceptable, instead of said amount payable notification module.

10. A commodity sales method that is carried out when a user purchases a selected commodity, said commodity sales method comprising the steps of:

- (a) causing a server computer to receive a purchase request of a selected commodity from the user computer and specify a commodity price of the selected commodity;
- (b) causing the server computer to receive a trade-in request of a used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and determine a trade-in quote of the used article, based on the received quotation requirement information;
- (c) causing the server computer to set a deduction of the selected commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity, according to the trade-in quote of the used article thus determined;
- (d) causing the server computer to subtract the setting of the deduction from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity to calculate a difference; and
- (e) causing the server computer to notify the user computer of the calculated difference as an amount payable.

11. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10, wherein said step (c) sets the deduction to be not less than a

preset support price.

12. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10,
wherein said step (b), in response to receipt of the trade-in
5 quote of the used article and the quotation requirement
information, which is required for quotation of the used article,
specifies a tentative quote of the used article based on the
quotation requirement information, compares the specified
tentative quote with a predetermined reference value, and
10 determines either a price having a value range or a price having
no value range as the trade-in quote of the used article according
to a result of the comparison, and

 said step (c) sets the deduction of the selected commodity
 corresponding to a minimum value in the value range of the price
15 when the price having the value range is determined as the trade-in
 quote of the used article, while setting the deduction of the
 selected commodity corresponding to the price having no value
 range when the price having no value range is determined as the
 trade-in quote of the used article.

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13. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 12,
wherein the predetermined reference value is used to determine
whether an assessment of the used article is required to settle

a final trade-in price of the used article.

14. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 12,
wherein said step (c) sets the deduction of the selected commodity
5 corresponding to the minimum value in the value range of the price,
and when a final trade-in price settled after an assessment of
the used article exceeds the minimum value, said step (e) notifies
the user computer of a refund corresponding to a difference
between the final trade-in price and the minimum value, together
10 with the amount payable.

15. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 12,
wherein said step (b), in the case where the price having no value
range is determined as the trade-in quote of the used article,
15 based on the result of the comparison between the tentative quote
and the predetermined reference value, determines either a
settled price having no value range, which depends upon the
tentative quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article or
a preset fixed price, which does not depend upon the tentative
20 quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article according to
a value level of the tentative quote.

16. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10,

wherein said step (c), in the case where said step (b) determines trade-in quotes of multiple used articles, sets a total deduction of the selected commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity, according 5 to a sum of the trade-in quotes of the multiple used articles or a sum of deductions set for the respective used articles.

17. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10, wherein said step (d) adjusts the calculated difference to be 10 not less than a predetermined value.

18. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 17, wherein said step (d) adjusts the calculated difference to be not less than the predetermined value and sends the user computer 15 a message showing that the trade-in request of the used article is not acceptable, instead of execution of said step (e).

19. A used article quotation system that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a 20 user, said used article quotation system comprising:

a quotation requirement information acquisition module that, in response to receipt of a request for quotation of the user computer itself, which has been sent from the user computer,

causes the user computer to automatically read out quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the user computer, and acquires the quotation requirement information from the user computer;

5 a quote determination module that determines a quote of the user computer, based on the acquired quotation requirement information; and

10 a quotation information transmission module that sends quotation information, which includes the quote of the user computer determined by said quote determination module, to the user computer.

20. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 19, wherein said quotation requirement information 15 acquisition module acquires information regarding each component of the user computer as the quotation requirement information.

21. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 20, wherein the information regarding each component of 20 the user computer includes at least a class of a CPU, a capacity of a memory, and a capacity of a hard disk.

22. A used article quotation system in accordance with

claim 20, said used article quotation system further comprising:

a component price storage module that stores a mapping of a component price to each component of the user computer,

wherein said quote determination module reads the 5 component price of each component of the user computer from said component price storage module, based on the information regarding each component of the user computer acquired by said quotation requirement information acquisition module, and determines the quote of the user computer according to a sum of 10 the component prices.

23. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 19, wherein said quotation requirement information acquisition module, in response to receipt of the request for 15 quotation of the user computer itself, which has been sent from the user computer, sends back a program, which causes the user computer to read out the quotation requirement information, to the user computer and subsequently acquires the quotation requirement information from the user computer.

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24. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 23, wherein said program utilizes either of a file for recording information regarding each component of the user

computer as the quotation requirement information or a control program for controlling each component of the user computer and thereby causes the user computer to read out the information regarding each component of the user computer.

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25. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 19, wherein said quote determination module determines a trade-in quote when the acceptance of the user computer is a trade-in with purchase of a commodity and a cash-out quote when 10 the acceptance of the user computer is a cash-out without purchase of any commodity, based on the quotation requirement information acquired by said quotation requirement information acquisition module.

15 26. A used article quotation method that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a user, said used article quotation method comprising:

(a) causing a server computer, in response to receipt of a request for quotation of the user computer itself, which has 20 been sent from the user computer, to acquire the quotation requirement information which is required for quotation of the user computer, from the user computer;

(b) causing the server computer to determine a quote of

the user computer, based on the acquired quotation requirement information; and

(c) causing the server computer to send quotation information, which includes the quote of the user computer.

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27. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 26, wherein said step (a) acquires information regarding each component of the user computer as the quotation requirement information.

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28. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 27, wherein the information regarding each component of the user computer includes at least a class of a CPU, a capacity of a memory, and a capacity of a hard disk.

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29. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 27, wherein said step (b) reads a component price of each component of the user computer from a component price storage module, which stores a mapping of a component price to each component of the user computer, based on the information regarding each component of the user computer acquired in said step (a), and determines the quote of the user computer according to a sum of the component prices.

30. A used article quotation method in accordance with
claim 26, wherein said step (a), in response to receipt of the
request for quotation of the user computer itself, which has been
sent from the user computer, sends back a program, which causes
5 the user computer to read out the quotation requirement
information, to the user computer and subsequently acquires the
quotation requirement information from the user computer.

31. A used article quotation method in accordance with
10 claim 30, wherein said program utilizes either of a file for
recording information regarding each component of the user
computer as the quotation requirement information or a control
program for controlling each component of the user computer and
thereby causes the user computer to read out the information
15 regarding each component of the user computer.

32. A used article quotation method in accordance with
claim 26, wherein said step (b) determines a trade-in quote when
the acceptance of the user computer is a trade-in with purchase
20 of a commodity and a cash-out quote when the acceptance of the
user computer is a cash-out without purchase of any commodity,
based on the quotation requirement information acquired by said
step (a).